

## Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SIG-01 H-01  
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/078 R

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-----042347Z 004476 /66

P R 042122Z MAY 77  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY  
INFO USMISSION USUN NY  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY TUNIS  
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS  
AMEMBASSY RABAT  
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 101596

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, LY

SLBJECT: DISCUSSION WITH LEADER OF LIBYAN GOODWILL  
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DELEGATION

1. AT THE URGING OF CONGRESSMAN SYMMS (R. IDAHO) ASSISTANT  
SECRETARY ATHERTON MET WITH AHMED SHAHATY, THE LEADER OF A  
LIBYAN QUOTE GOODWILL UNQUOTE DELEGATION, ON APRIL 30.  
THE DELEGATION ENDOWED A CHAIR IN ARAB STUDIES AT GEORGE-  
TOWN UNIVERSITY AND WILL NEXT PROCEED TO IDAHO TO DISCUSS

COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH IDAHO UNIVERSITY AND SOME TRADE OPPORTUNITIES IN AGRICULTURAL GOODS. SHAHATY IS SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECRETARIAT OF LIBYAN GENERAL PEOPLES' CONGRESS (A LEGISLATIVE BODY).

2. SHAHATY ASKED THAT GREETINGS OF QADHAFI BE CONVEYED TO PRESIDENT CARTER AND SECRETARY VANCE AND SAID THAT DESPITE DIFFERENCES IN OUR GOVERNMENTS' POLICIES, DELEGATION HOPED TO FIND WAYS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS AND TO START DIALOGUE. DEPARTMENT, HE CLAIMED, WRONGLY ACCUSES LIBYA OF INVOLVEMENT IN HIJACKINGS AND TERRORISM. HE QUESTIONED WHY USG WAS OPPOSED TO GROUPS SEEKING THEIR OWN INDEPENDENCE.

3. ATHERTON PROMISED TO CONVEY QADHAFI'S GREETINGS AND SAID THAT WE WELCOME CHANCE TO EXCHANGE VIEWS. WE HAVE ONE

MAJOR POLICY DIFFERENCE: WE THINK IT POSSIBLE TO SOLVE PALESTINE CONFLICT IN WAYS THAT WILL BE FAIR AND JUST TO ARABS BUT PERMIT EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL. WE RECOGNIZE THE TRAGIC HISTORY OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND ANY WORKABLE AND LASTING SOLUTION MUST ADDRESS THEIR NEEDS. WHILE PALESTINIANS HAVE RIGHT TO A HOMELAND, SO DO ISRAELIS. SOVEREIGNTY OF EACH PARTY MUST BE RECOGNIZED. MOREOVER, WE MUST BE REALISTIC. ISRAEL EXISTS. LIBYAN GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, DOES NOT BELIEVE IT POSSIBLE TO HAVE A JUST SOLUTION FOR THE PALESTINIANS AS LONG AS ISRAEL EXISTS. THIS IS THE MAJOR DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS. WE WILL TRY TO UNDERSTAND LIBYAN POINT OF VIEW BUT ASK THAT LIBYA UNDERSTAND OUR VIEW AND OUR RESPONSIBILITIES  
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AS WE SEE THEM.

4. ATHERTON EMPHASIZED THAT DIFFERENCE OF POLICY IS NOT THE MAJOR OBSTACLE TO IMPROVED BILATERAL RELATIONS. WE HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH MANY GOVERNMENTS THAT DISAGREE WITH USG. PROBLEM WITH LIBYA IS THAT IT ACTIVELY OPPOSES OUR EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND ACTS AGAINST THOSE MIDDLE EASTERN GOVERNMENTS WORKING WITH US. NOT LIBYAN POLICY BUT LIBYAN ACTIONS AGAINST OUR FRIENDS ARE MAJOR STUMBLING BLOCK.

5. ON TERRORISM, ATHERTON SAID WE HAVE EVIDENCE THAT LIBYAN GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN SUPPORT TO GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT CARRY OUT VIOLENT ACTS. USG DOES NOT OPPOSE EFFORTS OF PEOPLE TO SECURE THEIR FREEDOM. WE LOOK AT EACH SUCH MOVEMENT ON BASIS OF MERITS OF ITS CASE. WE DO OPPOSE METHODS OFTEN USED WHICH INVOLVE VIOLENCE AGAINST OTHERS WHO ALSO HAVE RIGHTS. WHEN LIBYA SUPPORTS SUCH VIOLENCE, WE MUST OPPOSE IT. WE WELCOME LIBYAN

STATEMENT THAT IT DOES NOT SUPPORT TERRORISM AND WILL BE  
LOOKING FOR EVIDENCE THAT IT HAS STOPPED.

6. SHAHATY SAID PALESTINIAN SOLUTION WAS MAJOR GOAL OF  
LIBYAN FOREIGN POLICY AND IT MEASURED ITS RELATIONS WITH  
OTHER COUNTRIES ACCORDING TO HOW THEY STAND ON THIS  
QUESTION. THE SOLUTION NOW SUPPORTED BY USG WOULD BE  
HARMFUL TO PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND ARABS IN GENERAL, HE  
CLAIMED. U.S. SUPPORTS AUTOCRATIC REGIMES WHEREAS IT  
SHOULD SUPPORT DEMOCRATIC SOLUTION THAT WOULD PERMIT  
CHRISTIANS, ARABS AND JEWS TO LIVE IN HARMONY. U.S.  
ENCOURAGES REACTIONARY REGIMES TO ATTACK LIBYA, SHAHATY  
ALLEGED.

7. SHAHATY SAID RELEASE OF "CIVILIAN" C-130S WOULD BE  
POSITIVE SIGN THAT U.S. IS INTERESTED IN IMPROVED RELATIONS  
AND SUPPORTS LIBYA'S DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS. ATHERTON  
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REPLIED THAT PROBLEM IS THAT C-130S ARE MILITARY, NOT  
CIVILIAN, PLANES. WE HAVE APPROVED BOEING 727 PASSENGER  
PLANES. RELEASING C-130S COULD NOT BE STARTING POINT;  
OTHER THINGS WOULD HAVE TO HAPPEN FIRST. SHAHATY REPLIED  
THAT BECAUSE U.S. WILL NOT SELL SUCH ITEMS, LIBYA IS  
FORCED TO TURN TO QUOTE THIRD PARTIES UNQUOTE (READ USSR).  
SHAHATY SAID THAT IT WAS HIS PERSONAL OPINION THAT  
COMMUNICATION WOULD BE IMPROVED IF WE EXCHANGED AMBASSA-  
DORS. ATHERTON SAID THERE WAS NO LACK OF OPPORTUNITIES  
TO EXCHANGE VIEWS. EVEN THIS MEETING WAS A QUOTE  
DIALOGUE UNQUOTE. LIBYAN CHARGE GASHUT IS VERY EFFECTIVE  
REPRESENTATIVE OF HIS GOVERNMENT. VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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